Over-aged Coaches

3680. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that over-aged EMU coaches are more in Howrah, Sealdah and Kharagpur Divisions of Calcutta suburban in comparison to Mumbai suburban;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that due to over-aged coaches frequent break-down are taking place in Calcutta suburban section;

(c) if so, the steps taken to replace the over-aged coaches of Calcutta suburban section; and

(d) the number of new coaches supplied to Calcutta suburban during each of the last three year?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The over-aged EMU stock has been programmed for replacement in a phased manner depending upon availability of new coaches from the manufacturers.

(d) No. of new coaches supplied to Eastern & South Eastern Railways during the last three years are as under:-

Year	ER	SE	Total
1994-95	33	20	53
1995-96	26	18	44
1996-97	119	42	161

Derailment of Hyderabad-New Delhi Express

3681. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether 13 coaches of Hyderabad-New Delhi Express train derailed between Kalhar and Mandi Bamora stations of the Central Railway on June, 15,1997;

(b) if so, the total number of passengers killed and injured;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted;

(d) if so, the findings thereof; and

(e) the total loss suffered and the extent to which compensation was given to kith and kin of persons killed/injured in this accident?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) The engine and 12 coaches trailing immediately after the engine of 2723 Dn Secunderabad New Delhi A.P. Express derailed between Kalhar and Mandi Bamora stations on Bhopal-Bina section of Bhopal division of Central Railway on 16.6.1997. In this accident, 7 passengers sustained grievous injuries and 6 suffered simple injuries.

(c) and (d) The accident has been enquired into by the Commissioner of Railway Safety/Central Circle who has held unknown persons, who wilfully tampered with track and removed fish plates and displaced contiguous short rail in advance of switch expansion joints and continuously welded track thereby causing discontinuity in track alignment, responsible for the accident.

(e) Damage to railway property has been estimated at Rs. 44.75 lakhs. Compensation will be paid soon after the claims are decreed by the Railway Claims Tribunal. No application has been filed by the Claimants so far in the concerned Railway Claims Tribunal. However, an amount of Rs. 36,500 as ex-gratia has been paid to the injured persons in this accident.

Construction of Foot Over Bridge at Garifa Railway Station

3682. SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether platform shelter, foot-over-bridge, seating arrangements have been sanctioned for Garifa Railway station of Eastern Railway;

(b) if so, the reasons for not completing the above works; and

(c) the steps to be taken to complete the above works within a time bound period?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) A platform shelter and a foot-over-bridge are sanctioned at Garifa at a cost of Rs. 4.23 lakhs & Rs. 7.32 lakhs respectively. These works are progressing as per schedule for completion by 31.3.98 as per target.

Adequate seating arrangement is available on platforms and in waiting hall.

(c) Does not arise.

Varanasi Telecom Scandal

3683. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "crores siphoned off in Varanasi Telecom Scandal" appearing in the *Indian Express* dated January 8, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;